

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

To the senate and house of representatives:

The reports of the heads of the several executive departments, acquired by law to be submitted to me, which are here-by transmitted, and the reports of the secretary of the treasury and the attorney general made during the year, furnish a comprehensive view of the administrative work of the last fiscal year relating to internal affairs. It would be of great advantage if these reports could be made an extensive period by every member of congress and by all who take an interest in public affairs. Such a perusal could not fail to excite a higher appreciation of the vast labor and activity which are given to the conduct of our civil administration.

The reports will, I believe, show that every question has been approached with consideration and decided from the standpoint of public duty and upon considerations affecting the public interests alone. Again I invite to every branch of the service the attention and scrutiny of congress.

The work of the state department during the last year has been characterized by an unusual number of important negotiations and by diplomatic success of a notable and highly beneficial character. Among these are the reciprocal trade arrangements which have been concluded, in the exercise of the powers conferred by section 3 of the tariff law, with the republics of Brazil, with Spain, for its West India possessions, and with San Domingo. Like negotiations with other countries have been much advanced, and I hope that before the close of the year further definitive trade arrangements of great value will be concluded.

The Sealing Difficulty.

In view of the reports which have been received as to the diminution of the seal herds in the Behring sea, I deem it wise to propose to her majesty's government in February last that an agreement for a closed season should be made, pending the negotiations for a permanent arrangement. It seemed to be approaching a favorable conclusion. After much correspondence and delays, for which this government was not responsible, an agreement was reached and signed on the 15th of June, by which Great Britain undertook from that date and until May 1, 1901, to prohibit the killing by her subjects of seals in the Behring sea, and the government of the United States during the same period to enforce its existing prohibition against pelagic sealing and to limit the catch by the fur seal company upon the island of Pribilof to 7,500 skins. If this agreement could have been reached earlier, in response to the strenuous endeavors of this government, it would have been more effective, but coming as it did, it has, nevertheless, resulted in greatly diminishing the destruction of the seals by the Canadian sealers.

In my last annual message I stated that the basis of arbitration proposed by Her Majesty's government for the adjustment of the long-pending controversy as to the seal fisheries was acceptable. I am glad now to be able to announce that the terms satisfactory to this government have been agreed upon and that an agreement as to the arbitrators is all that is necessary to complete the arrangement. In view of the advanced position which this government has taken upon the subject of international arbitration, this result is a gratifying confirmation to this method for the settlement of disputes such as have arisen in the Behring sea, will I doubt not, meet with the concurrence of congress.

American Meats in Europe.

The law of the last congress providing a system of inspection for our meat products intended for export, and clothing the president with power to exclude foreign products from our market in case the country sending them should be found to discriminate against any product of the United States, placed this government in a position to effectively urge the removal of such discriminations against our meats. It is gratifying to be able to state that Germany, Denmark, Italy, Austria and France, in the order named, have opened their ports to inspected American pork products. The removal of such discriminations in every instance was asked for and given solely upon the ground that we had now provided a meat inspection that should be accepted as adequate to the complete removal of the danger of disease which had been previously urged. The state department, our ministers abroad, and the secretary of agriculture have co-operated with the most intelligent zeal for the accomplishment of this great result. The outlines of an agreement have been reached with Germany, looking to equitable trade relations in consideration of the continued free importation of her sugars, but the time has not yet arrived when this correspondence can be submitted to congress.

The New Orleans Lynching.

The lynching at New Orleans in March last of eleven men of Italian race by a mob of citizens was most deplorable and a discreditable incident. It did not however have its origin in any general animosity to the Italian people, nor in any disrespect to the government of Italy, with which relations were of the most friendly character. The fury of the mob was directed against these men as the supposed participants or accessories in the murder of a city officer. I do not allude to this mitigating in any degree this offense against law and humanity, but only as affecting the international questions which grew out of it. It was once reported by the Italian minister that several of those whose lives had been taken by the mob were Italian subjects, and a demand was made for the punishment of the participants and for an indemnity to the families of those who were killed. It is to be regretted that the manner in which these claims were presented was not such as to promote a calm discussion of the questions involved; but this may well be attributed to the excitement and indignation with which the crime naturally evoked. The view of the Italian government as to its obligations to foreigners domiciled here were fully stated in the correspondence, as well as its purpose to make an investigation into the matter and to determine whether there were present any circumstances that could, under such rules of duty as we had indicated, create an obligation upon the United States. The temporary absence of a minister plenipotentiary at this capital has retarded the further correspondence, but it is not doubted that a friendly conclusion is attainable.

Some suggestions growing out of this unhappy incident are worthy the attention of congress. It would, I believe, be entirely competent for congress to make offenses against the treaty rights of foreigners domiciled in the United States cognizable in the federal courts. This has not, however, been done, and the federal officers and courts have no power in such cases to intervene either for the protection of a foreign citizen or for the punishment of his slayers. It seems to me to follow in this case of law that the officers of the state charged with the police and judicial powers in such cases must, in the consideration of national questions, grow out of such incidents, and be regarded in such sense as federal agents as to make this government answerable for their acts in cases where it would be answerable if the United States had used its constitutional power to define and punish crimes against treaty rights.

The Trouble With Chili.

The civil war in Chili, which began in January last, was continued, but, fortunately, with infrequent and not important armed collisions, until August 29th, when the Congressional forces landed near Valparaiso and, after a bloody engagement, captured that city. President Balmaceda at once renounced that his cause was lost.

and a provisional government was speedily established by the victorious party. Our minister was promptly directed to recognize and put himself in communication with this government, so soon as it should have established its de facto character, which was done. During the pendency of this civil contest frequent attempts were made by the government to extend belligerent rights to the insurgents and to give audience to their representatives. This was declined and this policy was pursued throughout, which this government, when wrenched by civil war, so strenuously insisted upon on the part of European nations. [Here follows an account of the Italian affairs.]

During the progress of the war in Chili this government tendered its good offices to bring about a peaceful adjustment, and it was at one time hoped that a good result would be attained. But this hope was disappointed. The collapse of the government of Balmaceda brought about a condition which is unfortunately too familiar in the history of the Central and South American States.

With the overthrow of the Balmaceda government, and many of his counselors and officers became at once fugitives for fear of arrest and appeal to the command of the officers of the foreign naval vessels in the harbor of Valparaiso and to the resident foreign ministers at Santiago for assistance and asylum. I have not been willing to direct the surrender of such of these fugitives as were in the hands of the government without suitable conditions.

It is believed that the government of Chili is not in a position, in view of the precedents with which it has been confronted, to refuse the request of the United States, and the correspondence has not thus presented any such denial. The treatment of our minister for a time was such to call for a detailed protest, and it was gratifying to observe that unfriendly measures, which were undoubtedly the result of the prevailing excitement, were at once reconsidered and relaxed.

On the 15th of October an event occurred in Valparaiso so serious and tragic in its circumstances and results as to very justly excite the indignation of our people and to call for prompt and decided action on the part of this government. A considerable number of the sailors of the U. S. S. Baltimore, then in the harbor of Valparaiso, were suddenly and without warning, nearly simultaneously in different localities in the city. One petty officer was killed outright and seven or eight seamen were seriously wounded. So far as I have yet been able to learn no other explanation of this bloody work has been suggested than that it had its origin in hostility to the United States flag, the sailors wearing the uniform of their government and not in any individual act or personal animosity. The attention of the Chilean government was called to this affair and a statement of the facts obtained by the investigation we had conducted was submitted, accompanied by a request to be advised of any other or qualifying facts in the case.

The Chilean government, which might tend to relieve this affair of the appearance of an insult to this government. The Chilean government was also asked to inform this government if it did not exist this government would confidently expect full and prompt reparation.

It is to be regretted that the reply of the Chilean government, which was received, was not such as to satisfy our minister. A provisional government was couched in an offensive tone. To this no response has been made. This government is now awaiting the result of an investigation which has been conducted by the criminal court at Valparaiso. It is reported unofficially that the investigation is about completed, and it is expected that the result will soon be communicated to this government, together with some adequate and satisfactory response to the note by which the attention of Chili was called to the incident.

Should be disappointed or further needless delay intervenes, I will, by a special message, bring this matter again to the attention of congress for such action as may be necessary.

[The president then refers to the Caroline Islands matter and at some length to the Spanish celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America; also to the boundary line question on the Mexican frontier.]

The late outbreak against foreigners in various parts of the Chinese empire has been a cause of deep concern in view of the numerous establishments of our citizens in the interior of that country. This government does no less than insist upon a continuance of the protection and punitive measures which the Chinese government has heretofore applied. No effort will be omitted to protect our citizens peacefully sojourning in China, but recent unofficial information indicates that what was at first regarded as an outbreak of mob violence against foreigners has assumed the larger form of an insurrection against public order.

The Chinese government has declined to receive Mr. Blair as the minister of the United States on the ground that he is a participant while a senator in the enactment of the existing legislation against the introduction of Chinese laborers, he has become unfriendly and objectionable to the Chinese government. It is the intention of this government, which seems to rest as much on the acceptability of our legislation to the people of the United States as to the propriety of the measure, which, if admitted, would practically debar the selection of any representative so long as the existing laws remain in force.

Other Foreign Relations.

The arbitration treaty formulated by the International American conference lapsed by reason of the failure to exchange ratifications fully within the limit of time provided. Several of the governments concerned have expressed a desire to save this important result of the conference by an extension of the period. It is my judgment, however, that the United States to conserve the influential initiative it has taken in this measure by ratifying the instrument and by advocating the extension of the period.

This government has found occasion to express in a friendly spirit, but with much earnestness, to the government of the czar, its serious concern because of the harsh measures now being enforced against the Jews in Russia. By the use of anti-Semitic laws, long in abeyance, great numbers of those unfortunate people have been constrained to abandon their homes and leave the empire for reasons of the impossibility of finding subsistence within the pale to which it is sought to confine them. The immigration of these people to the United States is a matter of great concern, and it is to be assumed proportions which make it difficult to find homes and employment for them in the United States. It is estimated that over one million will be forced from Russia within a few years. The Hebrew race is a beggar; it is a large and a very unfortunate race, often under severe and oppressive civil restrictions. It is also true that he race, sect or class has more fully cared for its own than the Hebrew race. But the sudden influx of such a multitude, under conditions that tend to strip them of their small accumulations and to depress their energies and courage, is neither good for them nor for us.

The banishment, whether by direct decree or by not less certain indirect methods, of so large a number of men and women is not a local question. A decree to leave one country is, in the nature of things, an order to enter another—some of things. This consideration, as well as the suggestions of humanity, furnishes ample

ground for the remonstrances which we have presented to Russia, while our historic friendship for that government cannot fail to give the assurance that our remonstrances are those of a sincere and well-wisher.

Surveys for the connecting links of the projected inter-continental railway are in progress not only in Mexico, but at various points along the course mapped out. Three surveying parties are now in the field under the direction of the commission. Nearly 1,000 miles of the proposed route have been surveyed, including the most difficult part, that through Ecuador, and the Southern part of Colombia. The reports of the engineers are very satisfactory, and the progress of the work is not without obstacles have been met with.

The death of King Lilioukalanui in the United States, afforded occasion to testify our friendship for Hawaii by conveying the king's body to his own land in a naval vessel with all due honors. The government of his successor, Queen Lilioukalanui, is seeking to promote closer commercial relations with the United States, and for the Pacific coast to Honolulu are in progress, and this enterprise should have the suitable promotion of the two governments. I strongly recommend that provision be made for improving the harbor of Pearl River and equipping it as a naval station.

The Nicaragua Canal.

The annual report of the maritime canal company of Nicaragua, which is a much costly and necessary preparatory work has been done during the year in the construction of shops, railroad tracks, and harbor basins, and the progress of the work of canal construction has made some progress.

I deem it to be a matter of the highest concern to the United States that this canal, connecting the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and giving to us a short water communication between our ports upon those two great seas, should be opened to the commerce of the world on a practicable limit of cost. The gain in freights to the people and the direct saving to the government of the United States in the transportation of its mail, pay the entire cost of this work within a short series of years. The report of the secretary of the navy shows the saving in our naval expenditures which would result.

The senator from Alabama, (Mr. Morgan) in his argument upon this subject before the senate at the last session, did not overlook the importance of the canal, when he said that "the canal is the most important subject now connected with the commercial growth and progress of the United States." This statement is well promoted by the usual financial methods, and without the aid of this government, the expenditures, in its interest-bearing securities and stocks, will probably be a large actual cost.

I do not doubt that, built upon these business methods, the canal would, when fully inaugurated, earn its fixed charges and operating expenses, and the surplus are to be marketed at heavy discounts and every bond sold is to be accompanied by a gift of stock, as has come to be expected by investors in the canal. The canal will be seriously burdened to pay interest and dividends. I am quite willing to recommend government promotion in the prosecution of a work which, if no other method is adopted, will be a transcendent interest that the government should, in my opinion, secure it by direct appropriations from its treasury.

Under the law of July 14, 1890, the secretary of the treasury was authorized on August 13 during the fiscal year 1893, 118 ounces of silver bullion at an average cost of \$1.04 per ounce. The highest price paid during the year was \$1.10 and the lowest \$0.938. In exchange for this silver bullion there have been issued \$5,743,000 of the treasury notes authorized by the act. The lowest price of silver reached during the year was \$0.938 on April 22, 1891; but on Nov. 1, the market price was only \$0.90, which would give to the silver dollar a bullion value of 74 1/2 cents. A currency which is based upon silver dollar was felt in the market, silver was worth in New York about \$0.95 per ounce.

The act of August 13, 1890, which provides for the free coinage of silver in the last congress was most commendable in its prediction that the purchases by the government required by the law would at once bring the price of silver to 22 1/2 cents per ounce, and would make the bullion value of a dollar 10 cents and hold it there. The prophecies of the anti-silver men of disasters to result from the coinage of \$2.00 of silver for every dollar of gold, which the friends of free silver are not agreed, I think as to the causes that brought their prophecies to naught. Some facts are before us which indicate that the prediction of the anti-silver men of disasters to result from the coinage of \$2.00 of silver for every dollar of gold, which the friends of free silver are not agreed, I think as to the causes that brought their prophecies to naught. 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